

Amendments to the Claims:

1-24. (Cancelled)

25. (New) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor package, comprising the steps of:

a) providing a semiconductor die having opposed first and second surfaces, a peripheral edge, and a plurality of bond pads disposed on the second surface in close proximity to the peripheral edge;

b) providing a plurality of leads which each include a first surface, a second surface disposed in opposed relation to the first surface, and a third surface disposed in opposed relation to the second surface and oriented between the first and second surfaces;

c) electrically and mechanically connecting the bond pads of the semiconductor die to the third surfaces of respective ones of the leads through the use of conductive bumps; and

d) applying an encapsulant to the leads, the semiconductor die and the conductive bumps to form an encapsulating portion which at least partially encapsulates the leads, the semiconductor die and the conductive bumps such that the first and third surfaces of each of the leads are covered by the encapsulating portion and the second surface of each of the leads is exposed therein.

26. (New) The method of Claim 25 wherein step (a) comprises:

1) providing a wafer having a plurality of semiconductor dies connected to each other via scribing lines; and

2) separating semiconductor dies from the wafer by sawing the wafer along the scribing lines.

27. (New) The method of Claim 26 wherein step (1) further comprises fusing the conductive bumps to the bond pads of each of the semiconductor dies of the wafer.

28. (New) The method of Claim 25 wherein step (a) comprises fusing the conductive bumps to respective ones of the bond pads of the semiconductor die.

29. (New) The method of Claim 25 wherein:
- step (b) comprises plating a conductive layer onto the third surface of each of the leads; and
 - step (c) comprises electrically and mechanically connecting the conductive bumps to respective ones of the conductive layers.
30. (New) The method of Claim 25 wherein step (b) comprises providing a die paddle having opposed first and second surfaces and a peripheral edge, and positioning the leads about the peripheral edge of the die paddle in spaced relation thereto.
31. (New) The method of Claim 30 wherein step (c) comprises bonding the second surface of the semiconductor die to the first surface of the die paddle.
32. (New) The method of Claim 30 wherein step (d) comprises forming the encapsulating portion such that the second surface of the die paddle is exposed therein.
33. (New) The method of Claim 32 wherein step (d) comprises forming the encapsulating portion such that the first surface of the semiconductor die is exposed therein.
34. (New) The method of Claim 25 wherein step (d) comprises forming the encapsulating portion such that the first surface of the semiconductor die is exposed therein.
35. (New) A method for fabricating a semiconductor package, comprising the steps of:
- a) providing a semiconductor die having opposed first and second surfaces and a plurality of bond pads on the second surface;
 - b) providing a plurality of leads which each define a connection surface;
 - c) forming a protective layer on the connection surface of each of the leads such that the protective layer circumvents a portion of the connection surface which defines a bump land;
 - d) electrically connecting the bond pads of the semiconductor die to the bump lands of respective ones of the leads through the use of conductive bumps; and
 - e) applying an encapsulant to the leads, the semiconductor die and the conductive bumps to form an encapsulating portion which at least partially encapsulates the leads, the semiconductor die and the conductive bumps.
36. (New) The method of Claim 35 wherein step (c) comprises forming the protective layer through an electroplating technique.

37. (New) The method of Claim 35 wherein step (c) comprises forming the protective layer through an electroless plating technique.

38. (New) The method of Claim 35 wherein step (b) comprises providing a die paddle having opposed first and second surfaces and a peripheral edge, and positioning the leads about the peripheral edge of the die paddle in spaced relation thereto.

39. (New) The method of Claim 38 wherein step (d) comprises bonding the second surface of the semiconductor die to the first surface of the die paddle.

40. (New) The method of Claim 39 wherein step (e) comprises forming the encapsulating portion such that the second surface of the die paddle is exposed therein.

41. (New) The method of Claim 40 wherein step (e) comprises forming the encapsulating portion such that the first surface of the semiconductor die is exposed therein.

42. (New) The method of Claim 35 wherein step (e) comprises forming the encapsulating portion such that the first surface of the semiconductor die is exposed therein.

43. (New) The method of Claim 35 wherein step (e) comprises forming the encapsulating portion such that at least a portion of each of the leads is exposed therein.

44. (New) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor package, the method comprising the steps of:

a) providing a semiconductor die having opposed first and second surfaces and a plurality of bond pads disposed on the second surface;

b) providing a plurality of leads which each include a first surface, a second surface disposed in opposed relation to the first surface, and a third surface disposed in opposed relation to the second surface and oriented between the first and second surfaces;

c) electrically connecting the bond pads of the semiconductor die to the third surfaces of respective ones of the leads; and

d) applying an encapsulant to the leads, the semiconductor die and the conductive bumps to form an encapsulating portion which at least partially encapsulates the leads and the semiconductor die such that the first and third surfaces of each of the leads are covered by the encapsulating portion and the second surface of each of the leads is exposed therein.